

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 0 2 5 1

ABIDJAN FOR DATT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MORG, TO

SUBJECT: FRENCH ASSESSMENT OF CAPABILITY OF TOGOLESE ARMED FORCES

1. SUMMARY: FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE MORVAN ASSESSES THE TOGOLESE ARMED FORCES (FAT) AS WELL DRILLED, PHYSICALLY FIT AND ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEIR EQUIPMENT, BUT ABSENCE OF COMBAT-ORIENTED TRAINING, SHORTAGE OF OFFICERS AND NCOS, AND LACK OF LOGISTIC STRKCTURE PREVENT THEM FROM BEING A COMBAT-EFFECTIVE FORCE. SINCE ACCESS TO OFFICER AND NCO CORPS PERSONALLY CONTROLLED BY PRESIDENT AND NO EFFORT BEING MADE TO ENLARGE THESE TO ADEQUATE DIMENSIONS, MORVAN CONCLUDES MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS WILL NOT IMPROVE NO MATTER HOW MUCH FAT IS EXPANDED. HE BELIEVES FAT IS INTENDED TO GIVE POLITICAL IMPRESSION OF MILITARY POWER RATHER THAN BE A TRUE COMBAT FORCE. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE TO TOGO, LT. COL. JEAN MORVAN, PROVIDED DCM WITH FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF THE FAT WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS CONSENSUS OF FRENCH MILITARY ASSISTANCE PERSON-  
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NEL WORKING WITH FAT.

3. RECRUITMENT: THE 6-700 NEW RECRUITS INDUCTED INTO THE ARMY EACH YEAR ARE GENERALLY MENTALLY ALERT, LITERATE AND IN GOOD HEALTH, TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION IS DEFINITELY STACKED IN FAVOR OF NORTHERNERS.

4. TRAINING: BASIC TRAINING (A FRENCH SUPERVISED ACTIVITY) IS SOUND AND THE RECRUITS PASSED OUT ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MILITARY LIFE, AND COMPETENT IN USE AND CARE OF PERSONAL ARMS AND EQUIPMENT. UNIT TRAINING, HOWEVER, WAS ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS SHORTCOMINGS OF FAT. TROOPS NEVER GET TRAINING IN TACTICS OR UNDERTAKE MANEUVERS. THE TWO PARATROOP BATTALIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE ABLE TO JUMP AND HAD EIGHT PRACTICE, INCLUDING TWO NIGHT, JUMPS IN 1976. BUT ONCE TROOPS HIT THE GROUND, THE EXERCISE INVARIABLY ENDS

AND THEY HAVE NO PRACTICE IN REFORMING UNITS AND EXECUTING MILITARY MISSIONS. SOLDIERS FIRE INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS ABOUT ONCE A YEAR, BUT MOST FAT CREW-SERVED WEAPONS HAVE NEVER BEEN FIRED. THE QUAD-FIFTY AA GUNS (OBTAINED FROM EGYPT) DID NOT EVEN HAVE REGULAR CREWS, AND DRIVERS FOR THE VEHICLES HAD BEEN ASSIGNED ONLY IN PREPARATION FOR THE JANUARY 13 PARADE. THE SHARP APPEARANCE OF THE MOTORIZED UNIT AT THE PARADE WAS ACHIEVED BY THREE MONTHS OF INTENSE PRACTICE, BUT DID NOT REFLECT ANY MAYTERY OF THE MILITARY CAPABILITIES OF THE ARMS AND VEHICLES. DRIVERS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE NO EXPERIENCE IN OFF-ROAD OPERATION OR IN TACTICAL COORDINATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, FAT SOLDIERS ARE KEPT IN EXCELLENT PHYSICAL CONDITION BY HEAVY DOSES OF PT AND SPORTS, AND AS THE PARADE SHOWED, ARE WELL-DRILLED.

5. LEADERSHIP: MORVAN CHARACTERIZED LEADERSHIP AS AN EVEN MORE SERIOUS DEFICIENCY THAN COMBAT RELEVANT TRAINING. HE SAID THERE ARE ONLY 57 OFFICERS AND ABOUT 500 NCOS FOR OVER 4,300 EFFECTIVES. MOREOVER, SINCE MANY NCOS ARE IN THE GENDARMERIE IN NON-LINE POSITIONS, THE EFFECTIVE RATIOS OF LEADERS TO LED ARE EVEN WORSE. HE CONTRASTED THE SITUATION IN FAT WITH THE RATIOS SET AS TARGETS

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BY THE FRENCH ARMY: 6 OFFICERS AND 25 NCOS PER 100 ENLISTED MAN. THE 900 MAN PRESIDENTIAL GUARD HAD ONLY 2 OFFICERS AND ABOUT 20 NCOS. IT WAS NOT REALLY STRUCTURED INTO MILITARY SUB-UNITS SUCH AS COMPANIES, PLATOONS AND SQUADS, BUT INTO 42 MAN UNITS FOR PARADE AND PHYSICAL EXERCISE, EACH UNDER AN NCO. NEW LINE OFFICERS WERE BEING BROUGHT INTO FAT AT THE RATE OF ONLY 2 OR 3 A YEAR (6 ARE NOW IN TRAINING IN ALGERIA AND 4 IN FRANCE). EACH OFFICER CANDIDATE IS PERSONALLY SELECTED BY THE PRESIDENT AND MORVAN FEELS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS DELIBERATELY DECIDED FOR POLITICAL REASONS TO KEEP THE OFFICER CORPS AT ABOUT ITS PRESENT SIZE. CERTAINLY THE FLOW OF NEW LIEUTENANTS IS NOT EVEN KEEPING UP WITH OFFICER ATTRITION, MUCH LESS OVERCOMING THE LEADERSHIP LACK. WITH THE STEADY INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF FAT, THE SITUATION WAS GETTING WORSE. THE SAME SLOW RATE OF TRAINING APPLIED TO LINE NCOS AS WELL. APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, THE PRESIDENT IS WILLING TO PERMIT A FASTER RATE IN THE TRAINING OF MILITARY SPECIALISTS, AND A NUMBER ARE IN FRENCH SPECIALIST SCHOOLS AT ALL TIMES.

6. MAINTENANCE & LOGISTICS: ARMY EQUIPMENT IS GENERALLY WELL-MAINTAINED. FIRST LINE MAINTENANCE OF ARMS AND VEHICLES IS SATISFACTORY, AND WITH FRENCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ADEQUATE BACK-UP MAINTENANCE FACILITIES EXIST. A FRENCH SPECIALIST, FOR EXAMPLE, IS IN CHARGE OF PARACHUTE PACKING AND INSPECTION. SEVERAL ARE ASSIGNED TO ORDINANCE AND VEHICLE SUPPORT. LOGISTICALLY, THE GREAT VARIETY OF WEAPONS AND VEHICLES IS A PROBLEM. IT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION THAT FAT COULD CONDUCT EXTENDED COMBAT OPERATIONS SINCE NEITHER SUPPLY LINES REACHING BACK TO SOURCES OF PRODUCTION OR EVEN FIELD SUPPORT UNITS EXIST. FAT HEADQUARTERS DO NOT CONDUCT COMMAND POST EXERCISES.

7. NAVY & AIR FORCE: FRENCH AND TOGOLESE ARE AGREED THAT FRENCH ADVISORS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN FROM LINE POSITION AS RAPIDLY AS TOGOLESE CAN BE TRAINED TO REPLACE THEM. THIS HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN THE ARMY (NO FRENCH ADVISORS WORK DIRECTLY WITH THE FIRST INTERARMS REGIMENT), BUT IT WOULD BE MANY YEARS

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BEFORE IT COULD OCCUR IN THE NAVY OR AIR FORCE. FOR EXAMPLE, ONLY ONE OF THE AIRCRAFT PARTICIPATING IN THE JANUARY 13 FLY-BY, AN ALOUETTE HELICOPTER, WAS PILOTED BY A TOGOLESE. NEITHER SERVICE COULD CONDUCT ANY OPERATION WITHOUT FRENCH PARTICIPATION.

8. CONCLUSION: MORVAN CONCLUDED THAT FAT'S MISSION IS TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE (TO NON-PROFESSIONAL EYES) OF MILITARY POWER, BUT NO EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO SHAPE IT INTO A COMBAT-EFFECTIVE FORCE. UNTIL TRAINING IS REFOCUSED AND SERIOUS EFFORTS ARE UNDERTAKEN TO DEVELOP AN ADEQUATE OFFICER AND NCO CORPS, THE SITUATION WOULD NOT CHANGE NO MATTER HOW MUCH THE FAT IS EXPANDED OR HOW WELL IT IS EQUIPPED.

9. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY BELIEVES MORVAN WAS GIVING HIS PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT BASED ON TWO YEARS EXPERIENCE IN TOGO AND INFORMATION PROVIDED THROUGH THE FRENCH MILITARY ASSISTANCE MISSION.

10. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DATT COMMENTS. DATT MAY ALSO WISH TO INITIATE A DIA STUDY OF THE COMPARATIVE STRENGTHS OF TOGOLESE AND GHANAIAAN ARMED FORCES, SINCE THIS COULD BECOME AT LEAST A PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR IN THE DISPUTE OVER FORMER BRITISH TOGOLAND.

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